

<http://www.cnsnews.com/public/Content/Article.aspx?rsrcid=47916>

In a statement welcoming Obama's choice, the Egyptian government said Egypt "has long been at the center of Islamic intellectual thought. Egypt's long tradition of religious tolerance and diversity embodies the ideals and values of moderate Islam." The **U.S.**

Commission for International Religious Freedom,

an independent panel advising Congress and the administration, says in its 2009 annual report that "serious problems of discrimination, intolerance, and other human rights violations against members of religious minorities, as well as nonconforming Muslims, remain widespread in Egypt."

The State Department's latest report on human rights says the Egyptian government's "respect for human rights remained poor, and serious abuses continued in many areas" during 2008.